



FULBRIGHT

Foreign Student Program Frequently Asked Questions

2021-2022

Frequently Asked Questions:

We have compiled a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding Fulbright programs for Algerian nationals to the US. If you are looking for information, please check the FAQs first. If you cannot find the information you are looking for, please contact Nadia Ouhenia, Cultural Affairs Assistant at ouhenianx@state.gov

Eligibility:

Q: Is there an age limit for participation?

A: No. There is no specific age limit for participation in the program. The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board looks favorably on qualified graduating seniors who are still in the process of developing specific career plans. In fact, such applicants benefit greatly from the international skills and awareness they gain as a Fulbrighter, which will be invaluable as they embark on their careers.

Q: I'm a non-citizen of Algeria, but am permanent resident. May I apply?

A: No. Must be an Algerian citizen; individuals of other nationalities cannot apply in Algeria.

Q: I am currently studying or working outside of Algeria. Am I eligible?

A: No. If you are a permanent resident of another country, or currently working or studying in another country, you are not eligible for participation in the program. You must reside in the country throughout application, selection and placement process.

Q: I am graduating this year, but will not get my Bachelor's degree until after the Fulbright application deadline. Can I still apply?

A: No, you can't. Applicants must have completed undergraduate education and hold a bachelor's degree: 4-years program under the classical system or 5-years program under the LMD system (License plus M1/M2 degrees). Candidates need to upload a copy of their diploma or the Provisional Certificate by May 30 deadline.

Q: I graduated from a university outside of Algeria, but I am a citizen of Algeria. Am I eligible?

A: Yes. As long as you received the equivalent of a four-year undergraduate degree from an accredited university, you are eligible.

Q: I have already got a Master's degree; can I get another one through this program?

A: Yes. Graduate students holding a Master's degree or Diploma of Specialist are eligible to apply. However, priority is to award grants to candidates who have completed their undergraduate education. FSB members generally take a hard line when reviewing applications of candidates who already have a master's degree and wish to pursue a second master's degree in the U.S., especially when the applicant has a master's degree from another English-speaking country. Candidates who already have a master's degree may be lower ranked or assigned an alternate status. In some cases, they may be deemed ineligible to receive a Fulbright grant.

Q: Can I apply for PhD program?

A: No. Unfortunately, there is no U.S. government funded exchange program for doctoral students from Algeria, but you can get scholarships for PhD programs directly from U.S. graduate schools. If you need more information about these opportunities, contact the EducationUSA Center via e-mail: educationUSA-algiers@state.gov

Q: Can I apply for two different fields or degrees simultaneously?

A: No. You must decide which field or degree you are applying for prior to your application. It will not be possible to make any changes later.

Q: What if my undergraduate degree is unrelated to what I want to study in graduate school?

A: In the United States, in general, your undergraduate major does not need to be in the same field as what you plan to study in graduate school. For more information on U.S. higher education, please contact the EducationUSA Center.

Q: Is there a list of eligible fields of study for the program?

A: No, applicants can apply to all fields of study except the medical, veterinary and dentistry sciences (medical graduates may seek a Master's Degree in Chemistry, Biology, Public Health or Hospital Administration).

Q: I have studied in the U.S. before. Can I apply?

A: Yes. But preference is given to candidates who have not had extensive recent experience in the United States. Although this is defined in the regulations as not having resided in the U.S. for five or more consecutive years in a six-year period preceding the date of application, the preference is for candidates without recent U.S. or Foreign experience. Candidates who have had U.S. or foreign experience may be lower ranked and given alternate status by the FSB in Washington DC, or, in some cases, deemed ineligible. The FSB Board members also have concerns about candidates who have studied for long periods in other English-speaking countries. The general preference is for candidates who have had little or no experience in the U.S. and, to some, other English-speaking countries.

If you do have significant experience in the U.S., you may apply, but explain in your application how further experience in the U.S. will fulfil the Fulbright mission and not be a duplication of prior visit;

Q: Is there a minimum GPA for applicants?

A: No. Applicants will be evaluated based on the merits of their entire application, including their GPA, essays, work experience (if any), references, test scores and the in-person interview.

Q: Are there any requirements attached to the Fulbright grant?

A: Yes. All Fulbright grantees are subject to a 2-year home country residency requirement, which means that you will need to return to Algeria for a minimum of two years on completion of your program in the United States. Thus persons desiring permanent residence in the U.S. are not eligible for the program.

Q: I am currently studying and researching in the U.S. Am I eligible for a Fulbright award?

A: No, we only consider applications from people who are still residing in Algeria.

Completing application:

Q: When should I apply?

A: You should apply in the application cycle in the year prior to when you will start your program in the U.S. For example, for the program beginning in August- September 2021, you should be ready to apply by the application deadline of May 30 2020. Start planning well in advance. One to two years ahead is not too early. Applications for Fulbright Programs run on a similar timeline to applications for graduate study at U.S. universities.

Q: How do I apply?

A: You must apply through the online application available here: <https://apply.iie.org/ffsp2021>

Q: Are there any special instructions for completing the online application? Where can I find them?

A: Yes, there are specific instructions (posted on Embassy web site), which you must follow carefully to ensure you complete the application correctly.

Q: Can I send my application or additional documents by mail?

A: No. The Embassy will NOT be accepting hard copy applications – please apply through the online system only.

Q: Should I inform or get permission from the Fulbright Office before I apply?

A: There is no need to contact the Fulbright Office before completing your application. Please ensure that you meet the minimum eligibility requirements, and do not forget to follow the “Fulbright Foreign Student Program Application Instructions” at the same time you are making your application.

Q: Do I have to provide copies of both diploma and academic transcript?

A: Yes. When applying, you have to provide scanned copies of your diploma and transcripts, as well as a certified English translation of both documents.

Q: Do I need to send my high-school transcripts?

A: No, only academic transcripts from all post-secondary schools attended.

Q: Do I have to provide a writing sample, for instance, a copy of my published article or my thesis?

A: No. You should not submit any writing samples unless you are specifically asked to.

Q: Do I have to submit printed copies of my application?

A: No. You should only submit the online application. We do not accept applications by e-mail or regular mail.

Q: Which additional documents could I provide? For instance, certificates, letters of appreciation etc.

A: Applicants will be required to submit along with the online application the following items:

- Translated academic transcripts and diplomas along with copies of the original documents. Translated documents must be done by a sworn translation office.
- TOEFL or IELTS scores no more than two years old and GRE General Score. The GMAT score is required for applicants applying for MBA programs only.
- An up-to-date CV detailing all prior education and work experience.
- Three letters of reference. If letters of reference are in French or Arabic, an official translated version in English is needed.
- A personal statement in English up to 600 words in length.
- A research proposal in English relating to field of study (if applicable).

Q: I have the required two years of professional experience, but it is not in my chosen field. Will my application be at a disadvantage?

A: Work experience in the field you wish to pursue is an indication of your commitment to that field and is considered additional preparation for graduate work. Work experience can often make up for any academic experience you may lack. While it is not a mandatory requirement, a lack of relevant work experience may diminish your chances to earn the scholarship.

Q: Does the program require applicants to submit contracts of employment and certificates of extra-curricular activities?

A: No. Contracts of employment and certificates of all kinds are not required. You just need to list your work history and extra-curricular activities in your CV.

Q: What does the selection committee want to see in my Research/Study Objectives and Personal Statement?

A: The Study/Research Objectives and Personal Statement are your opportunity to explain to the selection committee why you want to go to the U.S. Your personal statement, approximately one page single-spaced, should distinguish you from one of the other thousand applicants. If your statements are unclear and/or vague, it is unlikely that you will be offered an interview. - Explain why a course in the U.S. is an advantage over doing a similar course in Algeria or any other country - Explain how a year or more in the U.S. fits in with your long-term career goals. - Include other reasons for wanting to spend time in the U.S. - Explain the wider significance and impact of your work or program of study.

Q. Do I have to apply in English?

A. Yes, you have to fill in the application, including the study objectives and research proposal, in English. Please note that application documents such as transcripts, diplomas, letter of recommendations, and others that are not in English must be translated into English by a sworn translation office.

Q. What happens to my applications after submission?

A. Your application is reviewed in-house. If you meet the basic requirements, it will be sent to the committee members for evaluation. The committee will then either recommend you for interview or not.

Q: How many reference letters should I submit?

A: 3 recommendation letters. If you submit less than three, your application will not be considered complete. Please do not submit more than the required three.

Q: Who could write a reference letter for me?

A: One reference should come from a supervisor of your academic work, another should come from a supervisor of your non-academic work (e.g. employment, extracurricular activities or volunteering). You should seek out strong, supportive references that speak to your accomplishments generally, but also specifically to your ability to carry out your proposed study program. Applicants should seek out letters of recommendation from people who have supervised you in work relevant to your proposed study. You need to provide 3 recommendation letters. Letters of reference play a very important part in the scholarship application. Unrevealing and ambiguous letters can jeopardize your chances of success as much as negative ones can.

Q: What do you want to see in my references?

A: You should ask people who know you very well, and preferably those who can comment on your academic ability as well as your leadership, character and interests. Draw your referees' attention to the guidelines at the top of the reference form. We also recommend that your referees read your Statement of Purpose. The selection committee wants evidence that you have attained a high academic standard and evidence of excellence in the workplace.

Q: Is there any specific form for reference letters? How can the reference letters be submitted?

A: Recommendation letters can be submitted in two ways. Highly preferred option is registering your recommenders in the online application. Once you register your recommenders, they will receive an automatic email with instructions on completing the online recommendation form. You can track the status of recommendations, send reminders, and add/delete recommenders through this system before and after submission of your application.

If the above option is not available, your recommenders can send the Letter of Reference Form to public affairs section email: ouhenianx@state.gov

Q: What if my recommenders miss the application deadline?

A: Your 3 references must be submitted by the application deadline or your application will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered. Make sure to contact your referees early and make them aware of the deadline with plenty of time to submit.

Q: Do I need to submit supplemental forms?

A: No. Skip this step of the online application.

Q: The application instructs applicants to name universities of their choice. Will the program administrators honor my choice?

A: Your stated preferences will be taken into account, but it is not always possible to or appropriate to submit the application to a grantee's preferred university. If selected as a finalist and there is no match between you and your choice, the program will find other universities where you have a better chance of gaining admission.

Q: I have applied on time but my supporting documents are late and will be submitted after the closing date. Will they still be accepted?

A: No. Application deadlines are strictly adhered to and no late applications or supporting documents will be accepted after the closing date.

Q: Is the application deadline ever extended?

A: Application deadlines cannot be extended for individual applicants or to accommodate personal circumstances.

Q: Can I apply straight to the university of my choice in the U.S. before submitting my Fulbright application?

A: No. You may suggest the universities of your choice on your Fulbright application; however, the Fulbright program team will make the final university placement.

Selection process:

Q: I submitted my application and supporting materials on time. When will I hear from you?

A: You will be informed (via e-mail) within approximately 30 days of the closing date. Due to the large number of applications we receive, we cannot contact each person individually. If you do not hear from us within 30 days of the closing date, please assume that your application was unsuccessful. We invite you to apply again for the next academic year. Some of our Fulbright Alumni applied two or three times before being accepted.

Q: How does selection process look like?

A: After the application deadline, all submitted online applications undergo a technical review. Applications that pass the technical review will then be reviewed by an independent reading panel that will evaluate and score each application based on a set of standard criteria. Applicants with the highest scores will then be invited to an interview, held at the Embassy. Nominations will be made from the top candidates, after the interviews.

Q: How many interview slots are there?

A: It depends on the number of qualified applicants. In general, we usually interview approximately 10-20 applicants each year.

Q: According to which criteria does the selection committee make its decision?

A: Nominees will be selected based on the following primary criteria:

- sufficiently high level of English to undertake full-time graduate level study in the U.S.,
- Evidence of ambition, high motivation, serious commitment and leadership potential,
- study in fields tied to future career goals that will significantly benefit the country of Algeria,
- outstanding academic records,
- satisfactory TOEFL and GRE/GMAT test scores,
- demonstrable ambassadorial skills with evidence of cultural sensitivity and a genuine desire to learn more about the United States and share with American citizens' aspects of Algerian culture,
- experience and interest in extracurricular and community activities, and
- a desire to further the Fulbright Program and give back to your home country upon returning.

Q: Do you give preference to applicants from some fields of study?

A: Yes, preference is given to applications in the following disciplines:

- Accounting/Finance
- Agriculture
- Architecture
- Biology

- Biomedical Engineering
- Business
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Crop Sciences
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- Environmental Sciences
- Information Sciences/Systems
- Labor/Industrial Relations
- Language Teaching
- Law
- Library Science
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Public Administration
- Public Health
- Transportation
- International Relations
- Political Science
- Entrepreneurship

Q: Will I have to get admission to a university on my own?

A: No, if you are selected, AMIDEAST Office will find an appropriate placement for you. They will apply to the universities that their experienced placement professionals think best matches your profile and suits your program needs.

Q: How many scholarships will be awarded to Algerian citizens each year? How big is the competition?

A: In recent years Algerian has been allocated 6-8 scholarships; this can vary from year to year, depending on U.S. Government budget allocations.

Q: What is the general timeline of the program?

A: The timeline of the program is usually as follows: Application: February- May Application review: June-July Interviews: July-August Nomination by the Embassy due by: September Announcement of results: April - June of the following year.

Q. What specifically do National Screening Committee panelists look for when they evaluate applications?

A. The National Screening Committee looks very closely at all application materials. Specifically, the Statement of Proposed Study is reviewed very carefully.

Considerations include the nature of the project, its originality, the academic preparation for completing the project described, and any additional investigation the student has undertaken to ensure that resources to accomplish the project are available in the proposed host country. The screening committee also takes into account factors such as academic and professional achievement, demonstrated leadership potential, and community involvement. Successful grantees are expected to exhibit these and other related qualities that demonstrate their flexibility and aptitude for success in an unfamiliar environment abroad.

Standardized tests:

Q: Do I need to take any tests at the time of application to the program?

A: Yes. Please upload scanned copies of test score reports. Also, if score is low, nominated candidates will be requested to take one or more of these standardized tests again to increase their chance to a higher score. The Fulbright Program will then provide you with test vouchers for these exams.

Q: Which standardized tests will I be required to take? Do I have to pay for any of these tests?

A: As a general rule, you will be required to sit for the official TOEFL iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language, Internet-based) and the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) exams.

The GRE is required by U.S. graduate schools and/or departments for candidates in most fields other than Law. The GRE is used by universities to get a sense of a test taker's academic potential and to determine his or her performance in analyzing and evaluating data. The GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) is required for certain courses of study in the field of finance and economics.

Q: Where can I prepare for the tests?

A: For TOEFL, a wealth of practice material is available at <http://www.ets.org/toefl/>. Many GRE practice materials can be downloaded for free at <http://www.ets.org/gre/>.

Q: When should I start preparing for the tests?

A: It is recommended that all applicants begin to familiarize themselves with the required tests at least three four months before taking them.

Q: How long do the test scores remain valid?

A: TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for two years. GRE/GMAT scores remain valid and are usually accepted by institutions for up to 5 years. For more information about the TOEFL and GRE/GMAT tests please contact EducationUSA Advising Center.

Q: I have graduated from a local branch of the international/foreign institution, and all of the subjects taught were in English. Am I exempted from the language exams?

A: No. If nominated, you must take TOEFL. This language proficiency test is required to gain admission to a U.S. university for international students from all non-English speaking countries.

Q: Can I submit an IELTS score instead of taking TOEFL?

A: No, an IELTS or any other standardized test of English language score may be accepted at the application phase, but if nominated, you will be required to take TOEFL IBT to prove that you have a sufficiently high level of English to undertake full-time graduate level study in the U.S.

Q: What is a minimum TOEFL and GRE scores I must achieve?

A: Candidates should try to obtain TOEFL scores that are in the 85-90 and higher (for candidates in Law, Public Administration, Journalism, Education, etc. - where strong written and spoken English skills are critical for successful study/research - scores should be 100 or more). On the GRE you should try to score 155 on Verbal and Quantitative sections. You can also consult the EducationUSA Center or access websites of U.S. universities to learn more about the requirements of various academic programs.

Q: Will my score on the TOEFL/GRE/GMAT affect my placement at a university?

A: Yes. Each university in the U.S. has different admissions criteria, but low test scores may make your application less competitive. Therefore, the Fulbright Program encourages finalists to prepare carefully for these exams.

About the award:

Q: What happens after I am chosen as a nominee?

A: Your application will be sent to AMIDEAST in the United States. Final grantee selection is contingent upon the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board's (FSB) approval, available funding, and successful academic placement by the AMIDEAST.

Q: Can you please give more information about the placement process?

A: AMIDEAST placement department for the Foreign Graduate Student Program works with practically all U.S. universities. We ask you to take into consideration that, despite your wish to study at a specific university in the USA, the placement of nominated candidates requires that finalists also pass the selection requirements of the universities they are placed at. At each university the requirements to enter, the lowest passing scores for tests and the requirements to additional materials, may vary. The application of each competition finalist is sent to approximately 4 to 5 universities where there is a program fitting the needs of the candidate. The placement department at AMIDEAST chooses the programs, having carefully analyzed the application and essays of each candidate. Upon receiving the responses from potential universities, the Fulbright Program and AMIDEAST make the final decision.

Q: Will I need to submit any additional documents if I become a finalist?

A: Yes, finalists will be required to submit a completed Medical History and Examination Form, as well as other documents as requested by the Fulbright office.

Q: Can I defer my Fulbright grant to the following academic year?

A: No, you may not defer. You can decline the grant and reapply next year.

Q: If I decline a Fulbright grant, and reapply, will my application be given preference?

A: Although you are welcome to apply again, your application will not be given preferential treatment.

Q: What does the Fulbright Foreign Student Program provide?

A: The grant provides J-1 visa support, tuition and fees, a living allowance, round-trip travel and health insurance.

Q: How are Fulbright Funding Packages determined?

A: The living stipends are determined by the U.S. Department of State and vary from location to location depending on the local cost of living.

Q: Can I take my dependents?

A: Yes, you can. However, you will need to demonstrate financial ability to support them, since the Foreign Fulbright Student program does not provide funding for dependents. You will be responsible for providing travel, adequate insurance, and other support for them. Fulbright Foreign Student Program grantees go to U.S. alone, initially. Once they are settled in their program in the U.S., usually after the first semester, grantees are joined by their dependents.

Q: Does the Fulbright Program provide any orientation for grantees before leaving for the U.S.?

A: Yes. The Program will organize a pre-departure orientation in Algiers for all grantees before they leave.

Q: How long does it take to complete the program after receiving the grant?

A: Usually, master's programs in the United States can be completed in 2 years or less. The grant is first awarded for one academic year and will be renewed for the second year of study based on academic standing of the grantee. In order for your grant to be renewed, you must demonstrate that you have made satisfactory academic progress in your authorized study program and have maintained full-time study status. A grant for LL.M. study is 1 academic year in length and is not renewable. Candidates appointed to certain types of Fulbright grants may be required to arrive during the summer for an introductory course or intensive English program prior to the academic year.